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OBSERVATIONS

ON

DISCOVERIES OF ROMAN REMAINS

AND THE

SITE OF A ROMAN MILITARY POSITION IN SEDBURY, GLOUCESTERSHIRE;

AND

ON THE IDENTITY OF THE CHAPELRY OF ST. BRIAVEL'S,—THE LIDNEIA PARVA OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY,—WITH THE LEDENEI OF DOMESDAY.

COMMUNICATED TO THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE

Archæological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland,

HELD AT GLOUCESTER, JULY 21, 1860.

BY

GEORGE ORMEROD, D.C.L., F.R.S.,

OF TYLDESLEY AND SEDBURY PARK.

PRIVATE RE-IMPRESSION.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY BRADBURY AND EVANS, WHITEFRIARS.
MDCCCLX.

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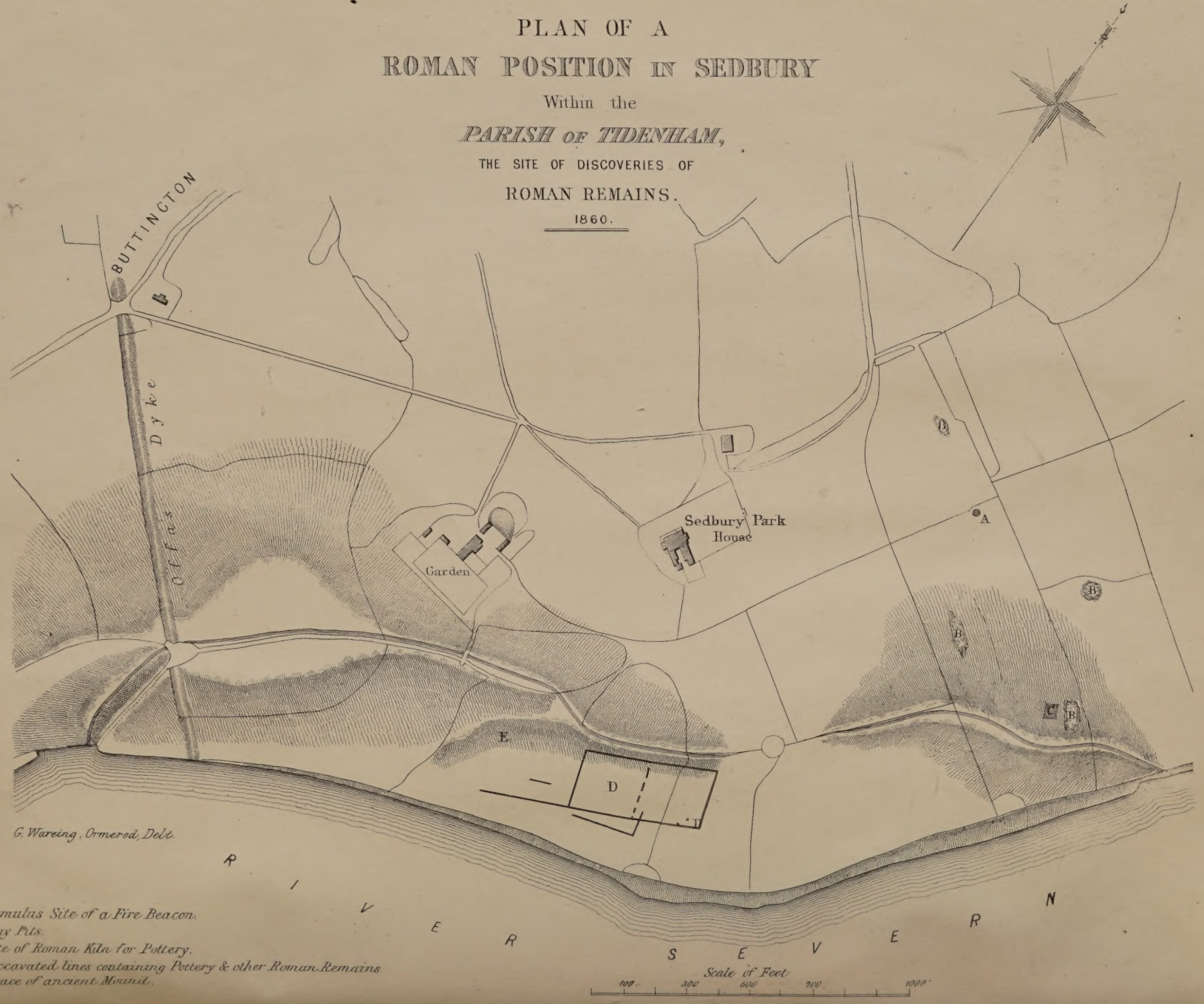
PLAN OF A
ROMAN POSITION IN SEDBURY
Within the
PARISH OF TIDENHAM,
THE SITE OF DISCOVERIES OF
ROMAN REMAINS.
1860.



A *Tumulus Site of a Fire Beacon.*
B *Clay Pits.*
C *Site of Roman Kiln for Pottery.*
D *Excavated lines containing Pottery & other Roman Remains.*
E *Trace of ancient Mound.*

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After the communication of the following Memoir to the Institute, the examination of the site of the Roman Position in Sedbury was resumed and completed in the autumn of 1860.

A second square space of the same dimensions as the first, which is described in page 9, adjoined it on the north-east side, forming altogether a parallelogram of about 140 yards by 70 yards, as marked on the plan.

One nearly uniform ditch or fosse surrounded this entire space, and was 10 feet wide at the top, and 4 feet 7 inches in depth, sloped in a much greater degree inwards, on the side towards the inclosure, than on the outer side, seemingly with the object of supporting some former bank or mound, with part of which the fosse appeared to have been filled, and which differed from the soil of the fosse itself. A slight irregularity of outline occurs on the side of the parallelogram which is nearest to the Severn.

The same kind of remains continued to be found, the pottery being uniformly such as had been connected with culinary purposes, the tables of the soldiers or officers, or preparation for their repasts, with various fragments of iron too much corroded to be identified.

One fragment of a vessel, raised in bas-relief, and encaustically coloured, represented the chase of a hind by a dog. It is remarkable for its close resemblance to the figure on one of the vessels given in Mr. Roach Smith's Antiquities of Richborough, page 59, which Station was occupied by soldiers of the Augusta Secunda, the Legion which garrisoned Caerleon, and to which the formation of this Position may probably be referred.

Sedbury Park, *Dec.* 12, 1860.

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OBSERVATIONS ON DISCOVERIES OF ROMAN REMAINS IN SEDBURY, WITHIN THE PARISH OF TIDENHAM, GLOUCESTERSHIRE, AND ON THE SUPPOSED SITE OF A ROMAN MILITARY POSITION THERE, NEAR THE CONFLUENCE OF THE SEVERN AND WYE.[1]

By GEORGE ORMEROD, D.C.L., F.R.S.

The object of the present memoir is to identify the precise locality of a military position on the right bank of the æstuary of the Severn, where Roman remains have lately been discovered in great abundance, which is surrounded by lines of British and Roman communications, and is near to all the supposed ancient passages of the Severn. The object is limited, at present, to preserving a notice of this recent discovery and of the characteristics of the locality.

The exact site is marked in the map which accompanies these observations, and also in a plan drawn with reference to other objects of antiquity, and contained in vol. xxix. of the Archæologia, pl. ii. p. 16. It lies between the tumulus there indicated, which has been a fire-beacon, and the Sedbury cliffs; but it is necessary, first, to notice the geological character of the ground, since the selection of it for military purposes would turn on the facilities for defence given by these peculiarities.

The cliffs, which form the barrier between this high platform and the Severn, rise to the height of nearly 200 feet above its low water mark, and consist of new red sand-

[1] Communicated to the Section of Antiquities at the Meeting of the Institute in Gloucester, July 21, 1860.

stone overlaid with lias covered by transported red marle and gravel. These beds are nearly horizontal, and being almost unbroken by faults in the part described, the lias clays formed a natural reservoir, and impounded the water previous to that recent drainage which led to the discovery of the remains described in the present memoir. A few years ago, the adjoining fields, on the northerly side, were almost impassable after heavy rains, and in earlier days must have formed an absolute marsh, affording a defence on the land side, as the lofty precipices would give defence towards the æstuary. The oblong parallelogram, thus defended, would be divided from this former marsh by two small brooks which run towards N.E. and S.E., or nearly so, to deep dingles at those extremities, and would complete the defence of an elevated platform of about twenty-six acres.

It is not intended to claim for the military position, thus described, any identity with a Roman station in its more peculiar sense, namely, that of the Itinerary of Antonine; neither does the writer vary, on account of these later discoveries, from what he has already written respecting the ancient communications with Venta Silurum from the left bank of the Severn,[2] which have been admitted by Mr. Octavius Morgan in his excellent memoir on that celebrated fortress.[3] It is due, however, to any antiquary who may respect the authority of Richard of Cirencester, to state, that the distances of the newly discovered position, in Sedbury, from Aust on the left bank of the Severn, where some have been disposed to place Richard's *Sabrina*, and from Caerwent on the right bank, exactly tally with those in the well-known passage in the "Diaphragmata," relating to *Sabrina*, *Trajectus Statio*, and *Venta Silurum*. There can be no doubt that this position in Sedbury would protect the vicinal line from Aust to Blestium or Monmouth, and that the intersection of this with the vicinal road from Glevum to Venta would give easy communication with the last-named station, which, under difficulties of passage, might be an alternative occasionally desirable. The line given by Richard,

[2] Memoir on the British and Roman Roads communicating with Caerwent; Transactions at the Meeting of the Institute at Bristol in 1851, p. 40.

[3] Excavations within the walls of Caerwent in 1855. By Octavius Morgan, Esq., M.P., F.S.A. Archæologia, vol. xxxvi. p. 418.

according to Bertram, mentions SABRINA, from which, "*by traject*," you enter into Britannia Secunda, and into the STATIO TRAJECTUS, III. miles, and thence to VENTA SILURUM VIII. miles.[4] It is proper to note this striking coincidence, more striking as the position in Sedbury has been hitherto totally unknown, and to leave the matter for further discovery and consideration.

We may now turn to the Roman or Britannico-Roman lines of communication which environ this position on every side, but without dwelling on the passages of the Severn towards Caerwent, to the south of Aust. These would be,—

1. The before-mentioned vicinal line from Aust, continued on the right bank of the Severn through Beachley and Sedbury towards Blestium or Monmouth.

2. Another line from Glevum towards Venta Silurum, intersecting the last, and grazing Sedbury on the north west, respecting which much additional information has lately been collected.

3. Two other lines, tending towards Caerwent, being in continuation of a very ancient passage from the left bank of the Severn, coincident with Gale's "Traject or ferry over Severn" from "Oldbury." This was first clearly identified by Seyer,[5] and it is still used as an occasional passage from Oldbury to two several inlets or "pills" with gravel landing places at each end of the Sedbury cliffs. Lines of ancient ways can be clearly traced, through the woodlands of Sedbury, from these landing places to points of junction with the two vicinal Roman roads last mentioned, and they complete the circuit of roads around it.

We now come to the recently discovered Roman remains and to the site of them, surrounded by these various lines of early communications. It could not be supposed that a conspicuous site, thus girt with communications, commanding a view of the greater elevations from Bromsgrove to the Quantock Hills, of the Ostorian camps on the Cotswold range in front, and of a vale rich in the Roman settlements indicated in Lysons's Woodchester Map, and of every possible traject of the Severn æstuary, would be left unoccupied by

[4] Iter. xi.—"Ab Aquis, &c. . . . . Ad Sabrinam, VI. unde trajectu intras in Britanniam Secundam et Stationem Trajectum, m.p. III. Venta Silurum VIII." —Ricardus Corinensis, lib. i. cap. vii. in Bertram's Tres Scriptores, p. 39.

[5] Memoirs of Bristol, vol. i. p. 78.

the neighbouring garrisons. It was therefore no surprise, a few years ago, to discover the remains of a kiln, between the tumulus or beacon before-mentioned and the Sedbury cliffs, with its dilapidated walls and fractured grinding stones, and very numerous fragments of Roman pottery lying near the general surface, or in the excavated claypits marked in the plan which is given in illustration of the present memoir. But it was reserved for the last autumn to make fresh discoveries.

On opening drains to the depth of four feet, in the grounds near the cliffs, to the south of the tumulus before-mentioned, Roman pottery was discovered in each successive cutting, in the lines marked on the plan, at the points where the draining excavations crossed the *deeper* ancient lines. The pottery, hitherto found in these later excavations, includes some cinerary urns, one of which resembles a Cirencester vase, which has been published; but the greater part consists of *amphoræ*, *lagenæ*, *ollæ*, and *mortaria*, of ordinary

Roman Pottery, discovered at Sedbury.
Outside Diameter of central basin 9¼ inches.

Roman ware, more or less fractured, and also Samian with stamps of the makers.[6] There are also remains of lead, of vases repaired with lead, coal, cinders of coal and of wood, and

[6] The following names occur,—DOCCIVS ·F·—noticed elsewhere, as in plates of Lydney remains, Gloucestershire; also in London, given in Mr. Roach Smith's list of marks in his Roman London, p. 102;—M·INNA· probably inverted, as

ROMAN ANTIQUITIES DISCOVERED IN SEDBURY, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

Urns of Red and Grey Roman Ware, found in 1859, on the supposed site of a Military position, near the confluence of the Severn and the Wye.

Height of the largest Urn, about 11½ inches. Height of the two-handled Urn, 7 inches.

glass. One square, defined by excavated lines seventy yards in length on each side, and exhibiting choicer remains in its excavations, seems to have been an inclosure set apart for superior occupants. With these remains were found very numerous bones, of which, those of cows, calves, and sheep, are identified, many of them bearing marks of the knife and of the action of fire.

Various tiles have been found, according exactly with those at Caerwent in patterns, curves, and indentations; but as no mortared foundations have been discovered, it is conjectured that the soldiers occupying the position, either occasionally guarding the beacon and the look-out over the passages, or using it, as is highly probable, for the purposes of *Castra Æstiva* connected with Caerwent and its Legio Augusta Secunda, had tents only. Such temporary occupation for the purpose of summer camps is well explained in Whitaker's Manchester, Book I. chap. VI.

It may be desirable to recapitulate that the defences of the area are the cliffs towards the Severn, a morass formerly existing on the land side, and steep slopes at each end. On the summit at the southerly end are remains of a mound which may either have been an ancient territorial limit, or relics of an earlier military work. The northerly slope has been made much steeper by artificial escarpments.

Examination may possibly be resumed hereafter, the late shallow diggings having been limited to the requirements of agricultural improvements, but the results may be one step towards commencing investigations on the Silurian side of the æstuary of the Severn, in extension of those which Mr. Baker so successfully completed among the opposite outposts of BRITANNIA PRIMA.

NN are reversed in the impression, and to be read—ANNI·M·—or, according to Mr. Roach Smith's List, ANVNI·M·—; and—DEGNOMI—Mr. Roach Smith gives —DECMI·M· and —DECVMINI·M·— as occurring in London.

ON THE PROBABLE IDENTITY OF THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE CHAPELRY OF ST. BRIAVEL'S, RECOGNISED AS LIDNEIA PARVA IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY, WITH THE LEDENEI OF THE SAXON HUNDRED OF LEDENEI, NAMED IN THE DOMESDAY AS THE PROPERTY OF WILLIAM FITZ BADERON.

By GEORGE ORMEROD, D.C.L., F.R.S.

I. It has been generally supposed that the Vill, which, for many centuries, has borne a name derived from that of the adjacent Castle of St. Briavel, was passed over in silence in the Domesday Survey, and Rudder and Bigland aver such omission in direct terms. It certainly does not appear under its present designation of St. Briavel's, the origin of which name has not been ascertained, but which has first occurred to the writer of this memoir in the Fine Roll of 31 Hen I.,[1] where "Milo de Gloecestria" accounts, among other things, for disbursements connected with the services of one knight, serjeants, a porter, and the watch at the Castellum de Sancto Briavel.

II. With respect to the transference of this name from the Castle to the Parochial Chapel, *the same* occurs as that of the Patron Saint of the Chapel before 1166, in a Decree of that Bishop of Worcester, who consecrated it, as aftermentioned. But it is important to notice that this appellation of "*Capella S. Briavelli*" struggled with that of "*de Lidneia Parva*," which is preserved in a somewhat later episcopal award of the Bishop of Hereford, the district from which the Church claimed tithe being also denominated in the same document, "*Dominium de Lidneia Parva.*"

III. It is believed by the writer that the original name of the Chapelry was *Lidney*, and that it is surveyed in Domesday under the name of Ledenei in Ledenei Hundred.[2] Two other places of similar name occur in the Domesday Survey of Gloucestershire. One is Ledene[3] in Botlewes

[1] Page 76. [2] Fo. 167, col. 1.
[3] Fo. 165, b. col. 1.

Hundred, referred by Rudder to Upleadon, and foreign to the present discussion. The other is LINDENEE, in Bliteslau Hundred,[4] which has been universally admitted to relate to Lydney on the Severn, the only place in Gloucestershire now bearing that name.

IV. Of these two vills or lordships, the Ledenei of Ledenei Hundred and the Lindenee of Bliteslau Hundred have both been considered by Sir Robert Atkyns, Rudder, and Bigland to have been comprehended within the present Lydney, and to have been identical with manors therein, severally known as Warwick's, and Shrewsbury's, from the titles of former owners.

V. This is inconsistent with Domesday. Shrewsbury's seems to have been only an ancient subinfeudation, and the district comprehended within the present Lydney is on the *Severn side* of the Gloucestershire peninsula, whereas the Ledenei, with which it is proposed to identify St. Briavel's, the former Lidneia Parva, was a tenure *in capite*, and is distinctly stated in Domesday to have had rights of fishery in the *Wye*.

VI. As a part of the evidence will turn on an award made by the Bishop of Worcester, between the monks of Lire, patrons of the mother-church of Lydney on Severn, claiming tithe for their new chapel of St. Briavel within Lidneia Parva, and the monks of Saumur, previously possessing it by ancient usage, it may be better to premise that no church is named in Domesday within the greater or present Lydney. This last named Lydney was included in the "Terra Regis," having been forfeited by Roger de Breteuil, son of William Fitz Osberne the Norman grantee. It does not appear whether this mother-church was founded or otherwise by either of these Barons, or, after forfeiture, by the Crown; but it was certainly confirmed to Lire Abbey by Henry II.,[5] between 1154, the date of his accession, and 1173, the date assigned by Dugdale to the death of William Earl of Gloucester, one of the witnesses of this confirmation.[6] It further appears from an obit-book of Hereford,[7] that the Church of Lydney was given to Hereford Cathedral by Robert Abbot of Lire and Canon of Hereford; and the time

[4] Fo. 164, col. 1.
[5] Dugdale's Mon. Ang. (Ellis), vol. vi. p. 1092.
[6] Dugdale's Baronage, vol. i. p. 536.
[7] Appended to the Hist. of Hereford, 1717, p. 20.

of this seventeenth abbot is fixed between 1269 and 1271 by the list of Abbots in Du Monstier's Neustria Pia.[8] Lire, therefore, would have the patronage of the mother-church, to which the patronage of St. Briavel's or of Lidney Parva (as the Chapel was then variously denominated) was appended, up to 1269, and a document cited hereafter will prove its possession of this patronage before 1166.

VII. The next point relates to the foundation of the Chapel, and to the Decree of the Bishop of Hereford, who consecrated it, and declared it to be a Chapel of the Mother-Church of Lydney. This decree is given in the Monasticon from the original Register of Lire Abbey,[9] and contains a statement by R . . . , Bishop of Hereford, that it was recognised at the time of *his* Dedication of the Chapel of St. Briavel, that it was a dependency of the Church of Lydney, and that both belonged to the Abbey of Lire. This dependency on the mother-church has continued to the present century, but the argument has, hitherto, only proved the early use of the name of St. Briavel's.

VIII. The Episcopal Award,[1] which follows this Decree, will prove the date of this dedication to have been before 1166, and will show that this Chapel and its district retained a more ancient name of *Lidneia Parva*, although St. Briavel had been named in the preceding decree, as being the Patron Saint. It will, also, prove the previous interest of the monks of Saumur in this Lidneia Parva, which monks had been grantees of much ecclesiastical patronage and other property in the neighbourhood, from the direct representatives of William Fitz Baderon, the Norman Lord of the *Ledenei* in Ledenei Hundred.

IX. The award cited was made by R . . . , Bishop of Worcester, in a controversy "diu agitata," between the monks of Saumur and that of Lire, respecting the two several Chapels of Hualdsfeld and *Lidneia Parva*, and directs, that the monks of Lire (patrons of St. Briavel's at this time, as already proved) shall henceforward have two garbs, "de decimâ Dominii de Parva Lideneia quas Monachi Salmurenses solent *antiquitus* habere."

X. The date of this award would be between 1164 and 1166, for the following reasons: *William*, Abbot of Lire,

[8] Page 537. [9] Vol. vi. p. 1094.

[1] Monasticon, *ibid.*

agrees to this composition on behalf of his House, and as appears from the list given by Du Monstier,[2] would be William, tenth abbot, who died in 1166, and who was the *only Abbot William* contemporary with any Bishop of Worcester whose initial was R. This Bishop R . . would be Roger, son of Robert Earl of Gloucester, consecrated Bishop by Becket in 1164, and the Dedication of the Chapel of St. Briavel's (previously and subsequently Lydney Parva) would be between these dates ; and this will give a close approximation to the date of the foundation.

XI. It is submitted that this collective evidence will show,

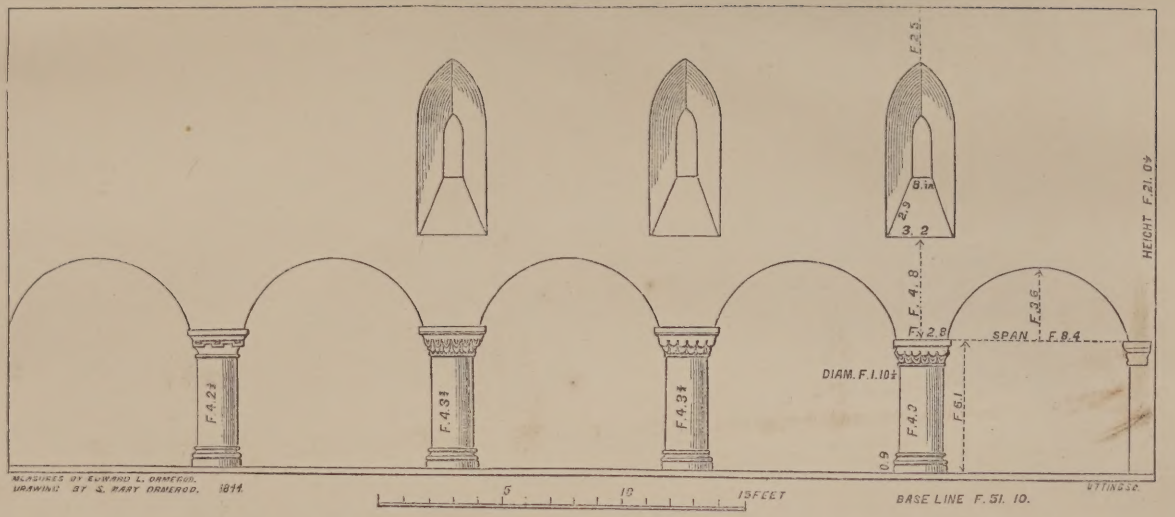
1. That the Domesday description of Ledenei in Ledenei Hundred, is not reconcileable to any part of the Domesday Lindenee in Bliteslau Hundred, or Lydney *on Severn*, the Norman Ledenei being on the *Wye*, and having rights of fishery therein.
2. That the chapel named Capella *Sancti Briavelli*, with reference to the Patron Saint, in the Decree of the consecrating Bishop, is named between 1164 and 1166 in a later Episcopal Award, as the Chapel of "*Lideneia Parva*," and that the locality from which it drew tithes, which had been anciently ("antiquitus") drawn by the monks of Saumur, was "*Dominium de Lideneia Parva.*"
3. That a long agitated controversy between these monastic houses, had led to an award, in which the monks of Saumur, in Anjou, are stated (as before mentioned) to have rights, "antiquitus," in this "Dominium de Parva Lideneia," those monks being known to have been the grantees of various properties in this neighbourhood connected with Monmouth Priory, from the direct representatives of that William Fitz-Baderon, in whose Norman grants the Ledenei of Ledenei Hundred is included in the Domesday Survey.

XII. It is submitted that these points would render the position of St. Briavel's, *proved* to be coincident with the *Lidneia Parva* of the twelfth century, totally irreconcileable with any part of the present *Lydney on Severn*, the *Lindenee* of the *Terra Regis* in Domesday ; and that they identify it, as far as such remote identification can be expected to be recovered, with Fitz-Baderon's *Ledenei in Ledenei Hundred*, on the *Wye*, as the later *Lidneia Parva.*

[2] Page 537.

XIII. In another point, the date of 1164—66 will be found to be clearly proved as that of the Episcopal Award, somewhat later than the Decree which follows the consecration of the Chapel of St. Briavel, and this may be useful to the architectural antiquary in considering the style of the south side of the nave and of carvings in other parts very similar to those of corresponding date at Malmesbury.

The general arrangement and form of the clerestory windows, and the arches and ornamental capitals of the above-mentioned south side of the nave, which has every appearance of being a fragment of the original building, will be gathered from the annexed representation drawn from measurement in 1844.



South Side of Nave of St. Briavel's Church.